

Students to vote on referendum

If tomorrow's student-initiated referendum passes, then yell leader run-off elections will be used this semester.

By ERICA ROY
THE BATTALION

Students will decide whether to establish yell leader run-off elections in a student-initiated referendum on Wednesday.

The referendum states that the first election will be held with the general student body elections, then the top five senior candidates and the top four junior candidates will proceed to run-offs that are held with student body run-off elections.

If the referendum passes by a majority of the students voting, Article V, Section III of the Election Regulations will be changed and yell leader run-off elections will be used in this semester's yell leader elections.

Student Body President Carl Baggett, a senior accounting major, said he will act on the outcome of the referendum.

"If on Wednesday the students pass

the referendum, I will enact it for this election," Baggett said.

Kevin Jordan, Student Government judicial board chair and an accounting graduate student, said it is possible that the referendum will not be held on Wednesday.

For a referendum to be held, a petition needed to be signed by 3,929 students, 10 percent of the student body. The 5,470 signatures gathered are currently being verified by the Student Information Management System.

Jordan said that since the number of valid signatures has not been made official, it would be premature to say a referendum will definitely be held on Wednesday.

The five polling stations at the Commons, the Sterling C. Evans Library, the Underground, the Wehner Building and the Memorial Student Center will be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For the referendum to pass, a majority of the students voting (50 percent plus one) must vote for yell leader run-off elections.

Jason Jaynes, the election commissioner and a junior computer science major, said every vote counts and he encourages all students to vote on Wednesday.

Senior yell leader Gary Kipe, an agricultural development major, said he thinks a large number of students will vote in the referendum.

"I expect a huge turnout," Kipe said. "This is something the student body has been behind for a long time."

Baggett said this is an emotional issue and students should support their positions by voting.

The referendum also states that if there are five or less candidates for senior yell leader or there are four or less candidates for junior yell leader, a run-off election will not be held.

If a candidate receives a majority of the vote in the general election, the candidate will immediately assume office and the number of run-off candidates will be decreased proportionally.

Bowen, student switch places for United Way

By MARISSA ALANIS
THE BATTALION

Lia Williams, a junior electrical engineering major, took charge of Texas A&M presidential duties Monday while University President Ray Bowen was busy taking notes in her classes.

Bowen carried his notebook to classes and sported an A&M windbreaker around campus. Meanwhile, Williams breezed through meetings while following Bowen's daily schedule.

"She's our first woman president," Bowen quipped.

The temporary switch was part of the second annual "Be Bowen for a Buck," a fund-raiser sponsored by A&M United Way Pack, a Student Government organization. Tickets were sold from Jan. 27 to Feb. 5 for \$1. A drawing for the winner was held on Feb. 5.

The switch required Bowen to attend Williams' classes, ranging from statistics to civil engineering, and take lecture notes.

"I think he'll do fine," Williams said. "I wonder what my notes are going to turn out like."

Bowen said Physics 219, an electromagnetism and electrostatics class, brought back memories of when he taught a similar course at A&M. He enjoyed his Statistics 211 course and was impressed with the wonderful professors on staff.



Ryan Rogers, THE BATTALION

Texas A&M President Dr. Ray Bowen sits in on a statistics class Monday morning.

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Faculty Senate approves Muster, Bonfire resolutions

By KATHLEEN STRICKLAND
THE BATTALION

The Faculty Senate approved two resolutions Monday that call for placing Bonfire on the Academic Calendar for the fall semester and give students who attend Muster University-excused absences.

The two resolutions were sent to the entire Faculty Senate after the Academic Affairs Committee passed them unanimously.

The Bonfire resolution also suggests that instructors who conduct classes during Bonfire should consider rescheduling.

The Muster resolution releases students from any class beginning later than 3:35 p.m. on April 21.

Josh Duncan, Student Government liaison to the Faculty Senate and a sophomore general studies major, said Student Government has worked hard

to get the resolutions approved by the Faculty Senate. The Student Senate previously passed a similar motion to allow students to be excused from class to attend Muster.

Amy Vandaveer, Muster chair and a senior English major, addressed the Faculty Senate in support of the motion.

"This tradition is part of the rich heritage that keeps the indescribable Aggie spirit alive," Vandaveer said. "This is the day when Aggies everywhere pause to pay homage to those that have gone on before. It is a memorial service that we hold for the Aggie family."

"This is not an infringement upon the rights of teachers or students. It is a symbol of respect and honor that we all have for life and the heritage of this university."

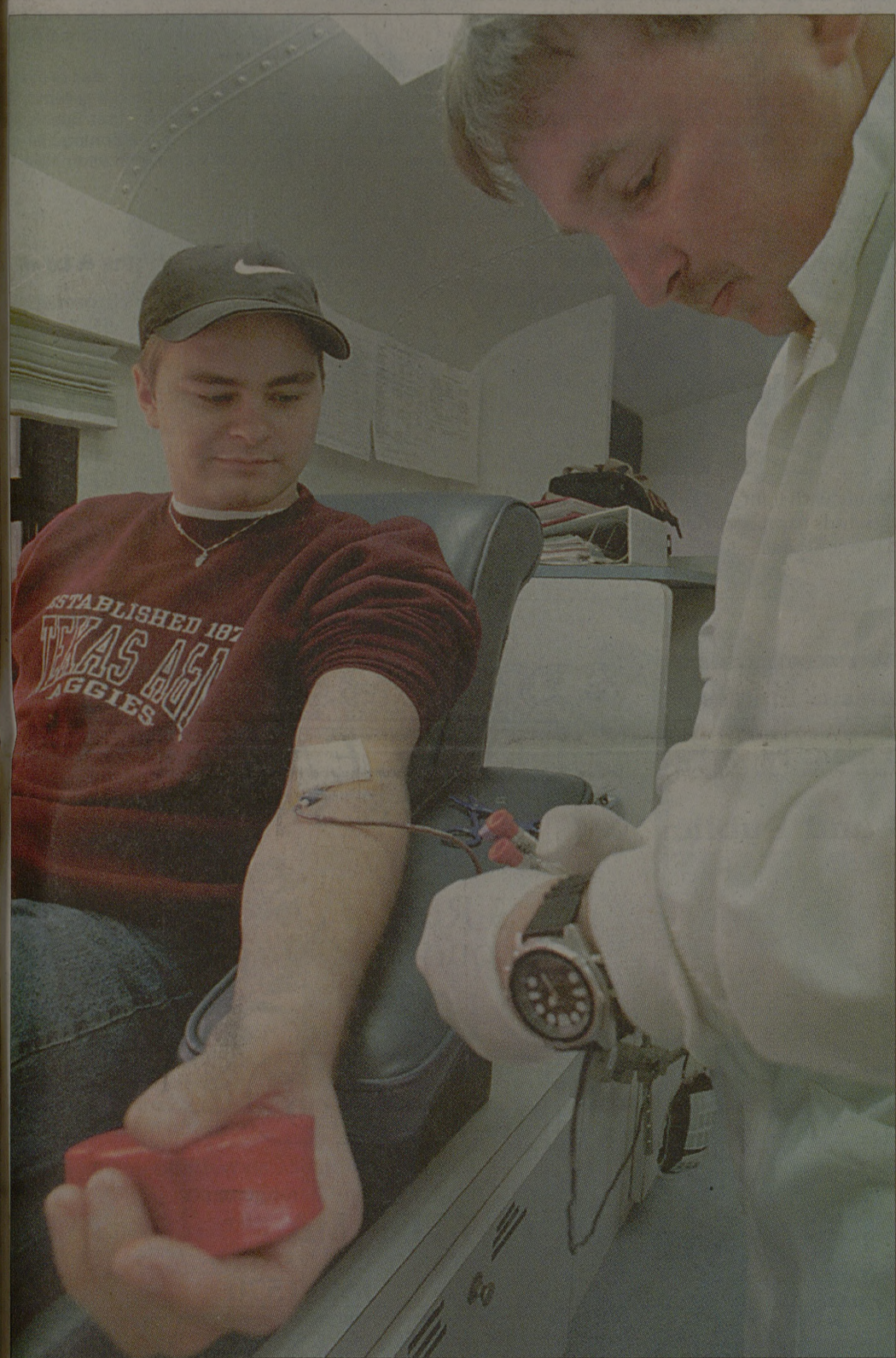
Donald Smith, an associate professor of industrial engineering, and Joe Templeton, a professor of veterinary pathology and genetics, both suggest-

ed that the academic affairs committee formally consider releasing all classes held on the day of Muster.

"This will force some Aggies to violate the Aggie Code of Honor because they're all going to miss class to go to Muster, whether they actually go or not," Templeton said. "I think we should dismiss class and not try to sort through who really went or didn't go."

In other business, the Senate:

- Recommended approval of new courses, course withdrawals and course changes.
- Approved a new degree program, B.A. in Maritime Studies, at Texas A&M University at Galveston.
- Discussed the upcoming general election of Faculty Senate.
- Approved proposed amendments in the Texas A&M University Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws.
- Discussed changes in the parking policy for retired faculty.



Ryan Rogers, THE BATTALION

Ouch! Richard Proset, a Red Cross mobile unit assistant, draws blood from Ron Goolsby, a sophomore mechanical engineering major, Monday afternoon.

Fish Drill Team places second

By LAURA OLIVEIRA
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M Fish Drill Team won second overall in a 17-team contest at the Mardi Gras Invitational Drill meet Friday. The competition was held at Tulane University in New Orleans. The team practices 15 hours a week in preparation for the competitions they participate in during the year.

Jason Hanson, a senior Fish Drill

Team adviser and a business major, said he was pleased with the outcome of the competition despite falling second to North Georgia.

"I think everyone tried their best and we were satisfied with the results," he said. "We were a little disappointed we did not bring back the trophy."

The team placed first in platoon basic, second in inspections and third in fancy exhibitions.

Travis Alton, a Fish Drill Team candidate and a freshman political science major, said he was intimidated at first by some of the more experienced teams.

"We did not know what to expect," he said. "We had no idea what a meet was like." Hanson said the young drill team overcame its lack of experience.

Hanson said the other teams look flawless because of the simple moves they incorporate into their fancy exhibition performance.

"If we wanted to, we could make it simple with just 10 guys," he said. "And we would probably be better than most of the teams. But we want to challenge the fish."

Javier Chapa, a junior Fish Drill Team adviser and an agricultural develop-

ment major, said the unique style of the Fish Drill Team is not favored by some of the judges.

"For some reason our style of drill is not necessarily what judges like," he said.

The 32 cadets on the team make up one of the largest teams at the competition. They wear pots and boots, a uniform unique to the competition.

Hanson said the death throw move used in fancy exhibition challenges the cadets. In this move, four cadets line up in front of one another. The first man in the row throws his rifle over the heads of the second and third man. The fourth cadet catches the rifle.

Alton is the fourth cadet in the line-up of the death throw. He said the move becomes second nature because of intense training.

"They make it our habit," he said. "It becomes like a reflex."

Chapa said conforming to straight drill style is out of the question for the Fish Drill Team.

"It is tradition," he said. "Whether we win or lose—that is not what these guys are competing for. The Drill Team learns discipline and teamwork."

VOCOM handles student financial aid information

► The service is available through the phone registration system.

By BENJAMIN CHENG
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M students now can access financial aid information through the phone registration system.

Students dialing in to the registration system can press "2" to access VOCOM, the software which handles financial aid information. VOCOM, which began operating on Feb. 3, allows students to obtain information such as the status of their financial aid, documents they need to complete and problems with their student loan.

Previously, students would have to obtain similar information through the mail, or by calling or coming in person to the Student Financial Aid Office.

Robert Lawson, assistant director for student

financial aid, said VOCOM makes information from the financial aid office easier to acquire.

"A student doesn't have to wait for the mail system to find what documents they need," Lawson said.

"Between March and September, we get thousands of phone calls a day," Lawson said. "People have major problems getting in. You could dial all day and get a busy signal."

Lawson said VOCOM should speed the processing of financial aid.

"If it can handle just 20 percent of our phone calls," Lawson said, "it's going to free up 20 percent of my work force to actually process student financial aid as opposed to answering questions on the phone."

Lawson does not anticipate students having the same trouble dialing in to VOCOM as they do with the phone registration system.

"The issue with the voice registration system is that you have 43,000 people trying to register in a week," Lawson said. "We have 27,000 people who can access [VOCOM] anytime."

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